

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

These remarks are submitted in response to the Final Office Action of September 2, 2010 (Office Action). Claims 1, 3, 14 and 18 have been amended. The amendments to these claims are supported by the specification and drawings (see, for example, page 23, line 19 through page 24, line 15; and page 25, lines 16-24 of the specification, as well as Figures 3, 4B, and 6). Therefore, no new matter has been added.

At the time of the Final Office Action, claims 1-12, 14, and 16-22 were pending. Claims 1-12, 14, and 16-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103. The rejections, and Applicant's response thereto, are set forth in full below.

The Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for conducting a telephone interview on February 11, 2011, to discuss the claim amendments. Applicant's position as articulated during the interview is set forth below.

I. Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §103

Claims 1-12, 14, and 17-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,912,564 to Appelman (hereinafter 'Appelman') in view of U.S. Patent Application published under 2002/0087646 to Hickey *et al.* (hereinafter 'Hickey') and U.S. Patent Application published under 2002/0049806 to Gatz *et al.* (hereinafter 'Gatz') and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,374,292 to Srivastava *et al.* (hereinafter 'Srivastava').

Claims 7 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Appelman in view of Hickey [*sic* – also in view of Gatz and Srivastava], and further in view of 'Official Notice'.

For the following reasons, these rejections are respectfully traversed.

II. Response

The arguments presented in the previous response filed on July 19, 2010, are still apropos and are therefore incorporated herein by reference. In this regard, claim 1 was previously amended to recite, *inter alia*, that both email information and instant messaging (IM) information for a particular user is stored in a single database thereby to facilitate

integration between email and IM systems and to provide a central repository for both email information and IM information, and that all group email messages from all users are stored in a single email store which is part of the single database. Claims 3 and 18 were amended in a similar manner.

Thus, Applicant's independent claims are presented in the context of a user IM account, such that both email information and IM information for a particular user is stored in a single database thereby to facilitate integration between email and IM systems and to provide a central repository for both email information and IM information, and that all group email messages from all users are stored in a single email store which is part of the single database. Although the Examiner further relies on Srivastava, Srivastava does not disclose that both email information and IM information for a particular user is stored in a single database thereby to facilitate integration between email and IM systems and to provide a central repository for both email information and IM information, and that all group email messages from all users are stored in a single email store which is part of the single database. Accordingly, Srivastava fails to cure the acknowledged deficiencies of the remaining combination of references. In any case, the Examiner must treat the invention set forth in each independent claim as a whole, and cannot dissect the claims into isolated parts. For these reasons, claims 1, 3, and 18 clearly patentably distinguish over the combined teachings of Appelman, Hickey, Gatz, and Srivastava.

Moreover, claims 1, 3, and 18 have been amended to recite, *inter alia*, that the access indicator comprises one of an extensible markup language (XML) tag or a hypertext markup language (HTML) tag that is operative to be set or reset to indicate that a member of the group has or has not accessed the group email message. Again, the combined teachings of Appelman, Hickey, Gatz, and Srivastava fail to teach, suggest, or provide a reasonable basis for such an access indicator.

With respect to dependent claims, these claims are patentable for the reasons given above regarding their respective independent claims. Moreover, the Examiner is again simply picking and choosing selective teachings from the secondary teachings to somehow arrive at the present invention.

CONCLUSION

Applicant believes that this application is now in full condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. Applicant requests that the Examiner call the undersigned if clarification is needed on any matter within this Amendment, or if the Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion. Please charge any deficiencies or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0951.

Respectfully submitted,

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